Lighting the Image: An Exploration of the Creative Use of Light on Nigerian Screen

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Abstract:
Of all the components of mise-en-scene, cinematographic lighting is one of the most important features which can make or mare any production. Unfortunately, when it comes to theorizing film from the Ivory Tower, this important feature of cinematic components had received little attentions from most Nigerian film scholars and critics. Often times, this aspect is only used to explain or buttress relevant points on film theory and discourse. However in this study, light shall occupy the centre stage. In carrying out this theoretical exploration on the creative use of light on Nigerian screen, the researcher employed structuralist approach, observation, and studio/film diagnosis and library study. In structure, this paper is designed with a conceptual framework on light, review the videographic lighting set up and highlights /shadows before looking at the four features of lights: *quality, direction, source,* and *colour.* In theorizing this unique component of film from the Ivory Tower, efforts are made in this paper, not only to identify the relevance of these features of light to Yoruba films but to include detail examination and the various usages of these filmic elements in productions.

Keywords: Lighting, Image, Exploration, Screen, Nigerian, Ivory Tower.

Introduction:
A person is likely to appreciate the values of light if he found himself in a darkroom with no single ray of light. Although his eyes might be very good but the various functionalities of his eyes will be dormant, inactive and disabled without any ray of light in his environment to activate his senses. In this case, the surrounding will appeared vague and the shadow will appear very thick. But if suddenly a ray of afternoon light is allowed to come into this darkroom, the person would notice that suddenly his eyes are blurred while feeling dizzy. It might take a few seconds or minutes before his eyes adjust to the new illuminated condition brought about by the sudden ray of bright sunlight. With the above demonstration one could conclude by saying that, only with the aids of the light could the person actually see and appreciate this attractively

decorated darkroom and it's beautifully painted yellow or blue colour of the wall. Consequently it could be said that light works with the camera eye the same way it does to the human or animal eyes

Conceptual Framework:

The employment of a structuralist approach in this study is based on the fact that, structuralism is concerned with the study of pattern of signification that is used in the construction of a work of art. It emphasises the fact that meaning is achieved through the replication or repetition of a particular structure to which a particular meaning is attached. Through a structuralist approach meaning is constructed via the connection among the various components of art object and between the signifier and the signified. In this case the pattern is the signifier while its connotation is the signified. In looking at the meaning of light in line with the above demonstration and concept, one could agree with the fact that: light is not only the energy from the sun, a lamp, etc. but an illumination that makes it possible to see things around us. However in cinematography, light is more than mire illumination, as indicated above, like the human eyes only with the aids of the light that images could be captured through the lens of a camera on a given film.

In filming process, the use of light can influence the meaning of a shot or determine the filming style of a director. According to a film director, Federico Fellini quoted by Bordwell and Thompson (2004:191), "Light is everything. It expresses ideology, emotion, colour, depth, style. It can efface, narrate, describe. With the right lighting, the ugliest face, the most idiotic expression can radiate with beauty or intelligence." While Bordwell and Thompson on their part believe that, "Much of the impact of an image comes from its manipulation of lighting." In their view, lighter and darker areas within the frame help create the overall composition of each shot and thus guide our attention to certain objects and actions." In shot composition, lighting could be used to articulate textures; to illuminate gestures for clarity or to stimulate suspense by concealing a detail of what is presented on screen. Put differently, lighting could be used to outline, establish or shape each features of an object on screen by creating highlights and shadows.

In establishing the capturing process in filming, Gill Branston and Roy Stafford (2006:400) opine that:

> Light is captured by the camera via the lens and passes through
> the aperture to reach the film or video light sensor. The lens

and aperture function just like your eye focusing on the subject controlling the amount of light.

In their examination of the basic arrangement of a three - point lighting, as revealed in 01, Bordwell and Thompson (2004:194) opine that:

> Classical Hollywood filmmaking developed the custom of using at least three light sources per shot: key light, fill light, and backlight. The most basic arrangement of these lights on a single figure is shown in.... [01] the backlight comes from behind and above the figure, the key light comes diagonally from the front, and a fill light comes from a position near the camera. The key will usually be closer to the figure or brighter than the fill. Typically, each major character in a scene will have his or her own key, fill, and backlight. If another actor is added [as in the dotted figure in... [01], the key light for one can be altered slightly to form the backlight for the other and vice versa, with a fill light on either side of the camera.

These two scholars equally assert that, lighting shapes objects by creating highlights and shadows. And that the exact and precise lighting requirement can be achieved by combining key and fill or by combining key, fill, and other sources. In furtherance of their exploration on the creative use of light in Hollywood films, these scholars identify four features of cinematographic lighting as: its *quality, direction, source* and *colour* and these identified features will be used as reference points in this study. In exploring the creative use of lighting on Nigerian screen, the exercise will commence with a general examination and review of the videographic/cinematographic *lighting set up* and the relevance of highlights/shadows which are the two basic sub components of lighting. Thereafter the study will identify and diagnose the four features of cinematographic lighting i.e. the lighting *quality, direction, source* and *colour.* In given the videographic lighting set up a closer examination in this study, the various roles of the basic components of the lighting set up will not only be reviewed, but the various roles of each component of the 'set up' will equally be dissected i.e. *the key light, the fill light* and *the backlight.*

The Light Set Up:
In videographic/cinematographic light manipulation, it is on record that, "...the lighting of the scene will start from the assumption that any subject normally requires two light sources: a *key light* and a *fill light.*" However, in a standard

filming (i.e. a three point lighting system), as indicated in **01**, the backlight often serves as the third light.

A *key light* is a powerful light that often serves as a primary source in film lighting. It is usually very bright, providing the dominant illumination and casting the strongest shadows behind a subject. The key light is the most directional light and it often diagonally hung/positioned in the front / above the subject. It usually corresponds to the motivational lighting source on set. According to *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, key light is "The main light on a subject. Usually placed at a 45 degree angle to the camera-subject axis. In high key lighting, the key light provides all or most of the light [requirements] in the scene. In low key lighting, the key light provides much less of the total illumination."

A *fill light* on the other hands, comes from less intense lamp placed at complementary angles. It is usually placed in a position near the camera. As the name connotes, it "fills in," and as a less intense illumination, it softens or eliminates shadows cast by the key light. From *Wikipedia*, a fill light is "An auxiliary light, usually from the side of the subject that can soften shadows and illuminate areas not covered by the key light." While a *back light* is "The main source of light that is behind the subject, silhouetting it, and directed toward the camera." Even though a back light is often located at the back and above the figure, yet it helps to separate the subject from the background and to create depth in the shot, sometimes it is used to eliminate cast shadow behind the figure in a frame.
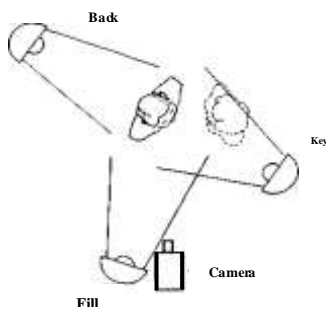
01. A Three-point lighting, one of the basic techniques of Hollywood cinema.
(Bordwell and Thompson 2004:194)

02. The is an example of a shot that used only the key and the fill lights without the backlighting.

It is on record as well that, the exact and precise lighting requirement can be achieved by combining key and fill or by combining key, fill, and other sources. It should also be noted that the key lighting could come on the figure in the shot from any angle of the frame. For instance, in **24**, the noonday sun is serves as the

key light and it appears at the back of the figures creating silhouette images on the frame. In **29**, the key light aimed at the characters from the left side of the frame while in **30**, the key light is from right side of the frame resulting in cross-lighting. In the same way the ray of the key light in **25**, is from the left downside of the frame resulting in underlighting, while the key light in **26** is from top right side of the frame resulting in top lighting. It is possible for a shot to use only the key and the fill lights without the backlighting as one can see this instance in *Aja Meji* (**02**). In this frame, a strong key light from offscreen left, throws a shadow on the curtain at the right. The dim fill light from the right side of the frame inconspicuously throws another cast shadow of the standing figure on the blue wall behind the settee, while revealing a diffused face of the sitting actor. In another shot from *Baba Jayejaye-2* (**03**), a key light from off screen left reveals the appearances of the two characters in the frame while casting their shadows on the wall and the door respectively.   The fill light is from the offscreen right highlighting the frontage of the bar.

03. A key light from offscreen left reveals the appearances of the two characters in the frame while casting their shadows on the wall and the door respectively, while fill light is from the offscreen right highlighting the frontage of the bar.

04. In this shot from *Kolo Kolo* the image is established with noonday sunlight...

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2004:195):

> ...three-point lighting system demands that the lamps be rearranged virtually every time the camera shifts to a new framing of the scene. In spite of the great cost involved, most Hollywood films will have a different lighting arrangement for each camera position. Such variations in the light sources do not conform to reality, but they do enable filmmakers to create clear compositions for each shot.

They equally feel that when the actors move, the director must decide whether to alter the lighting. By overlapping several different key lights, the filmmaker can maintain a constant intensity as actors moving around the set. Although constant lighting is not particularly realistic, but it has advantages and the main one is that, distracting shadows and highlights will not move across actors. In Nollywood screen, one could say with some levels of certainty that the tradition of rearranging the lighting setup in order to keep up with shifting camera positions and focuses has not being properly practiced. Majority of directors will prefer working with the noon sunlight (**04**). Hence, one could see that, in scenes with presumed multiple lightings, one could hardly identify the key, fill and back lightings in the various shots on those scenes. For instance in some films, one could hardly point out which of the multiple lights that throw the cast shadows at the back of the figure is the key, the fill or the backlighting.

05. Due to the fact that the lighting design is fixed throughout the whole scene, the lighting arrangement is just used for illumination, hence, one could not say this is a good example a shot with variations of the light sources, even though there are different shifts in the positions of the camera during the subsequent shots on this scene.

06. In this shot, the key is from offscreen left and the fill light from the offscreen right and there is no backlighting.

Even in a shot where one could identify the dichotomy in the design of the light, one could hardly point out the specific object the set up is meant to focus on. For instance in 05 one could say the key light is from offscreen, top left side of the frame while the fill light is at the top right side of the shot and the backlighting at the offscreen top centre. Here, the lighting design is not adjustable but fixed and static throughout the shooting of a whole scene. The impression one got from this is that the lighting arrangement is meant only for general illumination with no special cast as the main focus towards which the lighting setup is directed. Consequently one could not say that, this shot from *Alase* is a good example of a shot with variations of the unchangeable light sources, for different camera positions. In the same way, one could identify another fixed setup of the lighting system in **06**. In this shot, the setup is

established without a backlighting, but only with the key and fill lightings. In this case, the key light is red in colour and it's from offscreen left, while the fill light is blue in colour, from the offscreen right. Having introduced the three point lighting system in videographic taping/recording, attention will be shifted to the two basic sub components a lighting system. As indicated above, highlights and shadows are not just elements of a lighting system but they are relevant to all aspects of creative used of light.

Highlights and Shadows:

While highlight could be seen as a patch of relative brightness on a surface of an object in a shot, the other un-illuminated side of the object will result in a shadow (11 and 12). It is record that:

> Highlights provide important cues to the texture of the surface. If the surface is smooth, like glass or chrome, the highlights tend to gleam or sparkle; a rougher surface, like a coarse stone facing, yields more diffuse highlights. (Bordwell & Thompson, 2004:191)

For example, the texture of the ball in 07 and 08 look diffused despite the fact that the highlight is on it, while in 09, the back of the figure at the left side of the foreground on this frame, glitter on screen because his back is oily.

07. The light is invoked to conceal the other side of a rounded ball and this shot has an intrinsic capacity of stimulating suspense.
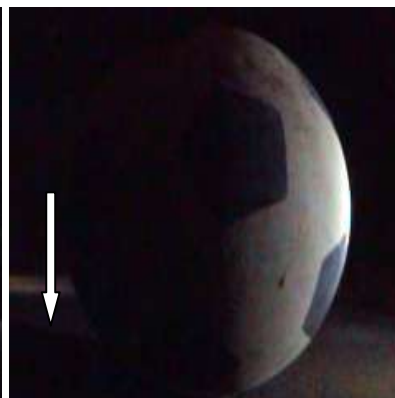
08. An attached shadow occurs in this shot as a result of the light failing to illuminate part of an object due to the shape or the surface feature of the ball which blocked out the ray of the light

09. The light is invoked to conceal the other side: the face of the figure at left side of the frame while it reveals the faces of other two character in the shot...

Both the *attached* shadows/*shading* and the *cast* shadows had been identified as the two types of shadows that featured on in film composition. Basically these two shadows are used in film to create the impression of space and a sense of three dimensional objects.

An *attached shadow*, occurs when light fails to illuminate part of an object because of the object's shape or due to the surface features. In 07 and 08, one could see how rounded features of these balls block out the ray of light from illuminating the other parts of these objects. Other samples of effective deployment of attached shadows in a narrative film could be found in 10 and 12 which are shots taken from *Saworoide*. In **09**, one could see that the lights from the left side of the shot create a good combination of both the highlights and attached shadows on the three figures on the shot. In other words, the back of first figure that is closer to the camera is highlighted while other parts of his body and face fall into darkness. From the appearances of the two other characters in the shot, one could see that some parts of their faces and their chests are highlighted, while the remaining parts of their bodies are in patches of darkness. In **10**, one could see also the ray of light from the right side of the frame obviously highlights the left side of the face while the other side of the face is in attached shadow. Here the left check, part of the nose and part of the neck are highlighted while the other parts are established in attached shadow.

10. Here the left check, part of the nose and part of the neck are highlighted while the other parts are established in attached shadow.	11. An attempt is made here to indicate the cast shadows with the arrow.	12. These lights help in setting up a scale of importance, emphasizing the status of Oba Lapite as the most important person among the seated figures. Here, he is established as the most frontal and clearly lit figure.

The *cast shadows* on the other hand could be realised when the body of an object in a frame blocks out the light and the silhouette of the object is reflected on the floor or on the wall. Hence, the reflection so created is regarded as the cast shadow. Samples of the cast shadows are indicated with arrows in **11**. Apart from using lights to create a sense of a scene's space, lighting could also be used to shape a shot's overall composition thus revealing different levels of composition within the frame. Another shot from *Saworoide* could be used to demonstrate this. In **12**, a council of chiefs is established with the rays of lights coming from both the right and the left sides of the frame. These lights equally help in

setting up a scale of importance, emphasizing the status of Oba Lapite as the most important person among the seated figures. In this frame, he is established as the most frontal and clearly lit figure.

Quality, Direction, Source, and Colour of Lights:

Having established the features of highlights and shadows, attention will now be shifted to the exploration of the creative use of light on Nigerian screen. Let it be reiterated that this investigation will be done through structural identification and full examination of the creative use of these four features of lights (i.e. its *quality, direction, source,* and *colour*) and citing copious samples from Yoruba narrative screen.

The Quality of Light:

The *Quality of light* in film production refers to the relative intensity of the illumination. There are two basic types of quality in cinematographic lighting: the first is the *Hard lighting* which creates clearly defined shadows, crisp textures, and sharp edges, while the second which is *soft lighting,* that creates a diffused illumination. According to available records, 'the noonday sun creates hard light, while an overcast sky creates soft light.' Even though these 'terms are relative, and many lighting situations will fall between the extremes...' However, with critical observation, one could easily recognize the differences in these two frames in **13** and **14** which are shots taken from: *Saworoide* and *O Le Ku* films respectively. While the former represent a shot with hard lighting, the latter epitomise a frame with the soft lighting system. Basically either the hard light or the soft light could be used in visual narrative. In a film each of these techniques could be used exclusively of the other while in another film, both techniques could be combined.

| 13. The interior shot taken from *Saworoide* is established with hard lighting technique. | 14. This is a frame from *O Le Ku* – an example of a shot established with soft lighting technique |

The Direction of the Light:

The *direction* of lighting of a given frame is meant to describe the various channels through which the ray of light moves from the source lantern to a lit figure within that frame. In other words, "the path of light from its source or sources to the object lit." According to von Sternberg, as quoted by Bordwell and Thompson (2004:192), "Every light, has a point where it is brightest and a point toward which it wanders to lose itself completely.... The journey of rays from that central core to the outposts of blackness is the adventure and drama of light." From all available records, the five different modes of light direction in film production could be identified thus: *frontal lighting, sidelighting, backlighting, underlighting,* and *top lighting.* Henceforth, each of these identified modes will not only be examined but the purpose for its creative deployment in Yoruba films will equally be analysed.

Frontal lighting:

In most cases, frontal lighting is recognized by its tendency to eliminate shadows on screen. As it is used in *The Narrow Path,* most frontal lightings will make the shadow of an object fall directly behind it, where the shadow could not be identified by the camera. Basically frontal lighting is used to establish actions and other body gestures. Another usage of this type of directional lighting is to create fairly flat-looking images and this is confirmed in **15** and **16** respectively.

15. In this shot taken from *The Narrow Path*, frontal lighting makes the actor's shadow fall directly behind him where it could not be identified.

16. Another result of the frontal lighting is the possibility of creating a fairly flat-looking image

Sidelighting/Crosslighting:

Unlike the frontal lighting, sidelighting / crosslighting can be recognized by its tendency to illuminate a side of the figure within a frame while the other side might be in partial or total darkness, thus creating attached or cast shadows. Sidelighting often works hand in hand with the "highlighting." Although the

highlight is a patch of relative brightness on a surface of an object, (in this case, the source of light can come from any side of the object). But with sidelighting, the highlight will only come from either sides of the frame, resulting in "*cross-highlighting*" that sculpts the character's features.   Samples of this mode of lighting could be found in **17**, **18**, **25**, and **26**. From the first two frames under review, the cross lighting is basically used heighten dramatic action in **17** while in **18**, it is used to create suspense and heighten dramatic tension in *Saworoide* film.

17. Crosslighting can be recognized by its tendency to illuminate a side of the figure within a frame

18. In a shot from *Saworoide* the key and the fill lights from the right side of the frame highlight the first character holding the door while presenting the second figure almost entirely in silhouette.

19. The sun light outside the door serves as backlighting which equally helps to sculpt out the image of the actress from the background.

20. In this shot taken from *Ite Oba*, the sunlight serves as backlighting which tends to create silhouettes as it is used with no other sources of light.

Backlighting:

This use of backlighting in filming is called *edge lighting* or *rim lighting*. "Backlighting, as the name suggests, comes from behind the subject filmed. It can be positioned at many angles: high above the figure, at various angles off to the side, pointing straight at the camera, or from below." When used with no other sources of light, backlighting tends to create silhouettes, as in **19** which is another shot taken from *The Narrow Path* and in **20** which is a shot taken from *Ite Oba*. In each of these frames, the sun is used as the only source of light situated at background of the figures in each of these frame but helped in projecting silhouette of each figure. In other words, one could see that the sun light outside the door served as backlight for the figures in **19** also helped to sculpt out the images of these actresses from the background. Hence the images of these figures are presented in almost silhouettes.

In other instance, when combined with more frontal sources of light, backlighting can still produce silhouette as in 18. In this case, the outcome of the image depends on the placement of the figure within the frame. The shot in 20 reveals the noonday light serving as the backlighting that makes a silhouette out of each figure in the shot. Furthermore, backlighting could be used like the sidelighting to enhance action, create suspense and it could be used for other aesthetic purposes in a production.

Underlighting:

This type of lighting implies that the source of the light is coming from below the figure in a frame. In **21**, a critical observer could see that the invocation of the underlighting suggests an off-screen flashlight coming from the left side of the frame. Although it has been observed that underlighting is often used to create dramatic/horror effects, because it tends to distort features of the character but in the context of the shot under-review, it simply indicates an artificial lighting source meant to project a realistic light from a bonfire in the night.

21. The underlighting is used to create in the context a realistic light source from a bonfire in the night.

22. By invoking a top lighting technique, Tunde Kelani (T.K.) used it to glorify the aesthetic structure of the "Saworoide" drum and to establish it as a plant.

Top lighting:

The type of lighting occurs where the spotlight shines down from almost directly above the object/character in the frame. Samples of top lighting could be found in **22** where Tunde Kelani (T.K.) used it to establish the aesthetic values of the "Saworoide" drum by glorifying it's image in order to establish its importance as a centre *plant* within the narrative structure of the film system. In analysing this lighting technique and the importance on this shot under review, one could see that the light is coming from right top side of the frame, while the placement of the drum at the central of the frame, is used to emphasize the central role which the drum plays in the structural pattern of the whole story or plot in *Saworoide* film.

23. In *Saworoide* film, Kelani used this top lighting technique to depict the horror of cold blood murder an innocent boy had just witness and to establish his state of helplessness.

24. In establishing the two figures in this shot, there is a combined use of both the side lighting and top lighting.

In **23**, T. K. equally used this top lighting technique to depict the innocent and the state of helplessness of a boy who has just witnessed the horror of the gruesome murder of his parents. While in **24**, one could see that two directional techniques of a top lighting and cross lighting are combined in depicting the two figures on the shot. Apart from using the lanterns in establishing the top lighting technique, noonday sun could also be deployed in depicting a top light shot. Example of this could be found in **25**, where the noonday light services as the top- backlighting that makes the figure of each of the three actors in the shot to stand out from the background setting.

25. 1.28. The noonday light services as the top- backlighting that makes the figure of each actor in the shot to stand out from the background setting.

26. 1.29. From this shot, one could see further proof of the presence of other studio lights. To be exact, there is another reflection of other studio lights on the left side of the actor's head, therefore, the established lantern could not be seen as the only source on lighting in this frame.

The Source of Light:

The *source* of light in a given shot could be identified as another feature of cinematic lighting. Fictional filmmakers often use extra light sources to obtain greater control over the quality of pictures/images. Basically, filmmaker makes use of both *the false/motivational lighting source* and *the authentic but invisible lighting source*.

The False/Motivational Lighting Source:

This is a visible or onscreen source of light which could be described as the *established source of light* in a shot. Thus, it could come in form of the *table lamps* (as in 26) or *streetlights/house lights* (as in **27**) that are seen on screen but they are not the real or the principal source of illumination for filming the given mise-en-scenes. However, such visible source of light, only serves to motivate the lighting decisions made in a production.

27. The front of house light in this shot is a visible or onscreen source of light which could be described as the established source of light in a shot.

28. In this shot, Due to inadequate synchronisation, one could easily see that the ray of spotlight from the studio lamps which revealed the actresses actually created a cast shadows under the lantern which is the assumed source of lighting in the room.

The Authentic Source of Light:

The source of light in cinematic production is often hidden from the viewfinder of camera. The authentic source of light which could be described as the *genuine or the true source of lighting* is invisible to the audience. In most cases, a filmmaker will strive to create a lighting design that is in consistent with the artificial source(s) on the set. Moreover, in setting up the *sources* of authentic lighting, the shooting may require a two or three point lighting technique which to a great extend depends on the subject to be filmed and the condition of the shooting environment.

A further demonstration on each point raised under the lighting sources, will go a long way in explaining the complexity involved in the practice concerning the establishment of the various sources of light. To start with, in **26** which is a shot from *O Le Ku*, there, one could see that the lantern at the right - foreground of the table (*which is the false source of light*) is purportedly seen on screen as the source of illumination in this frame. However, a closer observation reveals that other studio lights are used in this shot. This is made clear with a glaring reflection of the studio lights on right foreside of the lantern. Furthermore, in this same shot, one could identify another proof of the presence of other studio lights coming from the left side of the frame; with the identification of another reflection on the top left side of the actor's head. Unlike the shot from *O Le Ku* which had just be examined, where the lighting designs clearly shows a proper synchronization of both the visible and the invisible sources of lighting. In this case, the authentic/invisible source of lighting is properly motivated by the artificial but visible lantern on the set. However, in **28** which is a shot from *The Narrow Path*, the synchronisation is not properly done. To be precise, a critical observer could easily see in this frame that the ray of spotlight from the studio

lamps which revealed the two figures in the frame, actually created a cast shadows under the lantern which is believed to be the source of lighting in the room.

The Colour of the Light:

It is on record that in any given production, filmmakers tend to think of lighting from two different perspectives of the basic colours – *the white of sunlight* or *the soft yellow of incandescent interior lamps*. (But with the revolution in lighting technology, there are lamps capable of producing lights that are as white as that of the sunlight.) In filming, the producers, could increase or reduce the vast amount of visual information in front of the camera by "using lighting to clarify and simplify the space. In contrast, digital lighting is built up little by little from simple." In practice, film directors often work with as purely white light as much as they can in order to control lighting typically for various production purposes. Consequently, a filmmaker can colour the onscreen illumination in any fashion by placing filters in the front of the light source.

As it is with other elements of the mise-en-scene, lighting could either be realistic or unrealistic. For instance, in depicting a realistic impression of the night, an high key combination of yellowish and blue- purple lighting is employed to represent the night hour in 21 while yellowish hard lighting is used in 22 to depict the colour of a night.

29. Another frame from *Saworoide* film, the high-key lighting technique is invoked to match the daylight in Lapite's palace. Here, the overall lighting design used key, fill and backlight to create low contrast between brighter and darker areas

30. This is a sample of shot with low key lighting technique, here a single key light from the down right side of the frame is used without any fill on the actress's face leave her expression almost invisible to enhance the mystery in the shot.

...we shall do so in his full glare.

31. This is another shot from Fopomoyo, both the key light and the fill light are invoked without background light but the two lightings are significantly less intense than what is obtainable in high-key technique.

In realising the impression of the night on screen Nigerian filmmakers had invented quite a number of colour devices. In most cases, filmmakers used a blue-purple lighting to give the impression of the night as it in **06**, **32**, **33**, **34** and **35**. In other instances, the soft yellow of incandescent interior lamps is used as the

cases in **26 – 28**. Yet hard yellowish lighting had also been used as on the frames in **22 – 24** and **33**. In portraying unrealistic scene of the witches den, the soft yellow of incandescent interior lamps are used as it is in **34**, while the whitish sunlight lamps are used in **35** and yet a blue-purple lighting in combination with reddish lighting are used in **36**.

32. In this shot from Aja Meji, low-key lighting creates dark shadows on actors and set in order to give the impression of the night.

33. A natural state of night hours on Lagos Street that is used as transitional device in a film could also be categorized under a shot with low key lighting technique.
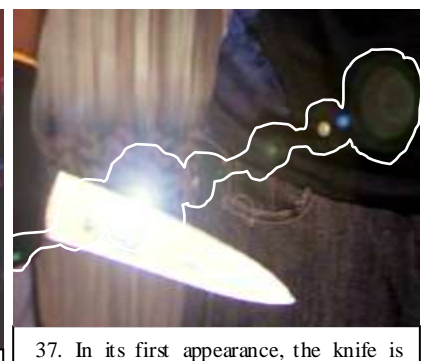

34. Members of *Aje* cult in *Fopomoyo*, their appearance are portrayed in white make ups on black costumes.

35. In Akisa Egbe, the costumes, and setting are designed in the basic white, black and red combination.

36. In SunmisolaOtelemuye, there is an introduction of a purple hue to the basic colour of the evils ones - white, black and red design.

37. In its first appearance, the knife is made to glitter in *Sunmisola...* with the aids of nondiegetic element/CGI, in order to enhance tension and set fear in both the screen victim and the audience.

38. Here in a dream sequence, where group of maidens are engaging in a dance contest seriously waving their waists to excite men among them is Odejimi, the dreamer, who watches with enthusiasm. This sequence is realised through the use of two different lighting designs – yellowish lighting is used for the dream world while reddish lighting is used for the main narrative story.

Lighting could also be used nondiegetically, (as external element meant to enhance the plot content of a narrative film) in order to reflect the mood, the period of narration or to identify the various levels of plot in a narrative film. For instance in *The Narrow Path*, T. K. used the yellowish lighting impression to separate a dream presented as a flashback, from the impression of the main plot in **38**. Aside from the basic functions of lighting, coloured light could equally be used to perform stylistic functions which are usually confined to acting and image movement. For instance, purple lights are used in *Jenifa* and *Suminsola...* films (39, 40) to show frightening and alarming state of each figure in these shots.

In addition to using light to projecting the mood Bordwell and Thompson (2004:197) claim that:

> Most film lighting is applied during shooting, but computer-generated imagery allows filmmakers to create virtual lighting designs. Powerful 3-D programs allow filmmakers to add broad overall illumination or strongly directional effects. Spotlights can sprinkle highlights on shiny metal, while "shader" tools model objects with attached shadows.

In buttressing this claim, a nondiegetic element, a computer generated spotlight is used to connote the sprinkling highlights on murderer's knife - a shiny metal in *Sumisola...* (**37**), while another computer generated lightening is used in *Ebora* (**41**) to demonstrate a metaphysical injection of evil power into a ring.

39. In this frame from Jenifa, purplish colour light is used to reveal the alarming state of the victim on screen

40. Here in Sunmisola..., the blue purple colour lighting is used to emphasize the point of death which is so frightening to Tega

41. A nondiegetic element a computer generated lightening is used in *Ebora* to demonstrate a metaphysical injection of evil power into a ring...

Although, a computer image generating package will allow filmmaker to create deferent numbers of lighting designs, yet it is on record that, digital lighting is time consuming because it is built up little by little from simple elements. While in normal filming, the directors control a vast amount of visual information in front of the camera by using lighting to clarify and simplify time, objects and their special relationship.

Conclusion:

In summary, this explorative exercise carried out in this paper, had been able to look through conceptual framework of structuralism to establish the meaning of light and standard format of lighting set ups. This paper had also been able to reveal the image capturing process with the aids of light. This paper had equally been able to consider the concepts of highlights and shadows before diving into the major focus of the study which is based on the various features of light. In diagnosing these features, the paper moved from light *quality*, through its *direction*, and *source*, to its *colour*, while the various usages of these features were not left out. From this exploration on the creative use of light, one could agree with the fact that, a shot is centrally controlled by these features of light and no component of mise-en-scene is more important than "the drama and adventure of light."(Bordwell & Thompson 2004:197). Therefore it is believed that this paper had been able to demonstrate ways in which filmmakers can successfully manipulate or combine various elements of lighting in advancing the techniques and quality of films produce in the country.

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